



Opening Keynote

A Dangerous Disconnect – Donna Moenning

The Center for Food Integrity’s consumer trust research provides insight to what consumers know about today’s food system. While there is chaos in the marketplace, consumer interest in food and agriculture is significant, spelling opportunities for those in agriculture who want to connect. CFI’s Donna Moenning will share the latest consumer research trends and recommend how to turn these insights into action to build trust.

Leadership

Crisis Management

Judy Rupnow, MorganMyers

What happens when an activist selects your farm or a member’s farm for an undercover video? Are you ready to manage the response required as media, protesters and others move in to cover the situation? This session will address the following: Preparing for a crisis – steps to put a plan in place; Prevention – steps to prevent a crisis; and Managing the response/ Implementing the plan – messaging, actions, resources and communication surrounding the situation.

Be in the Know

Steve Boe, WFBF

Want to track a piece of legislation or topic that is important to you? Together we'll navigate the confusing world of government websites and show you how you can get notifications on pending pieces of legislation that are of concern to you. We'll also go through examples of county websites and tips on trying to find the information you are looking for. Finally, we will go over the best practices for communicating with local elected officials and those with decision making authority.

It’s OK to Not Be OK

Jeff Ditzenberger, Farm Bureau member and Founder of TUGS (Talking, Understanding, Growing, Supporting)

Today’s difficult economic environment in agriculture has taken a tremendous toll on farmers and their families. This session will address the topic of depression and how to identify people who are at risk for suicide. We’ll discuss how to help them and how to help ourselves.

You Don’t Need a Title to be a Leader

Wendy Kannel, WFBF

Do you want to make a positive difference within your farm and business, community and family? Join us for a fun and interactive session to learn six ways of how you can lead from wherever you are.

Engagement

Advocating in a Marketplace of Distrust

Donna Moenning, Center for Food Integrity

People are more interested in food and farming than ever before. Consumers want to know who’s producing their food, how it’s being produced, and can I trust them? The Center for Food Integrity ‘shared-values’ approach is research driven and provides guidance for advocating in today’s marketplace. In this workshop, CFI’s Donna Moenning will highlight these communication principles to help empower your communication efforts.

Conversations with EASE

Johnna Miller, American Farm Bureau Federation

Conversations about how food is grown and raised happen every day. But, over the years, the voices of farmers and ranchers have been less than adequately represented in those conversations. This workshop, based on the model by USFRA, will prepare participants to ENGAGE in conversations about food production – rather than trying to defend it. Real conversations with consumers will help farmers and ranchers understand and ACKNOWLEDGE what consumers want; give farmers and ranchers a chance to SHARE their insight into how food is produced and EARN the trust of those consumers.

Tackling Tough Topics

Johnna Miller, American Farm Bureau Federation

It can be tough talking about controversial topics with non-farmers, but it’s necessary. This workshop will give you some tools to make it easier to tackle those tough topics without being “unfriended” or getting blocked on Twitter.

GMOs

Kallie Jo Kastensen, Farm Bureau member

In order to successfully promote what farmers and ranchers are doing on their operations, it is important we change our mindset from “educating the public about agriculture” to “marketing the agriculture industry.” One of the “hot topics” of agriculture and anti-agricultural groups is genetically modified organisms (GMOs). We see many marketing companies currently utilizing non-GMO labels to emphasize their products and in doing so promote an anti-agriculture message. To address this, we explore what GMOs are, messages against GMOs and how to successfully market the industry and what we do.

Consumer Education: Man on the Street

Andrea Brossard, WFBF Promotion and Education Committee and Patti Roden, WFBF District Coordinator

In the summer of 2018 Andrea and Patti attended the West Allis Farmers Market and did “Man on the Street” interviews with consumers. They approached strangers and asked them questions about agriculture – organic vs. conventional farming, buying local, antibiotic free vs. hormone free meat, GMOs, robots and much more. Attend this interactive workshop to hear firsthand about their experience and how you can educate consumers at Farmers Markets and other events. Get a glimpse of their interviews by watching the videos that were created by the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance. Andrea and Patti will get you up and out of your seats and asking the ‘tough’ questions of each other. Join us to grow your skills and communicate with consumers!

Say Whaaat? Finding a common language with consumers

Jay Hill, New Mexico Agriculturalist

Miscommunication and misconceptions happen all the time between the farmer and consumer. This workshop will focus on how to speak the same language and ensure you are communicating effectively.

Followers to Advocates

Sarah Hetke, WFBF

Ready to move from being a social media follower to a leader in advocating for agriculture? In this session you will learn tips and tricks that will make coordinating social content fun and easy. Explore apps and websites that can be used to create videos and graphics along with pages you should be following. You will also learn how you can get involved with WFBF social media accounts.

Branching Out While Sticking to Your Roots

Panel Discussion; Moderator: Jacki Moegenburg, Panel members: Lindsay Knoebel, Clara Hedrich, and Kara Kasten-Olson

Wanting to find another way to share your love of agriculture but still stick to your roots? How about using what you already have, to expand your business with value-added products. Hear from panel members about how they grew their business and branched out into a new market.

Where Do You Fit in the New Age of Choice?

Judy Rupnow, MorganMyers

Taste, price and convenience have driven consumer product development, but no more. Health, social impact, and transparency are driving corporations’ decisions. Presenting an engaging look at the dilemmas facing consumers, suppliers and farmers alike, this session will grapple with decisions organizations serving agriculture need to address to remain relevant in an era where choice rules. Is this the new normal? Will today’s ‘premium’ choices become tomorrow’s ‘commodity?’ Where do you fit in?

Putting the Playbook into Action

WFBF Promotion and Education Committee

The Playbook was launched by the Promotion and Education Committee to provide county Farm Bureau leaders with ideas and resources for planning county activities and events. ‘Plays’ are categorized from consumer outreach, education, promotion to member engagement. Come learn more about this resource and additional ways to promote agriculture in your community.

“It’ll Never Happen to Me”

Melissa Ploeckelman, Marshfield Clinic

When’s the last time you brought up the topic of safety with another farmer? And what was the response you heard? “I’m not worried, it will never happen to me.” Or maybe you heard “I just don’t have time to talk about it right now.” This workshop will give you the resources to talk to others about farm safety and learn to tell your story. It will also give you time to practice starting the conversation in a non-threatening environment.

Closing Keynote

Reconnecting Farmers and Consumers – Jay Hill

Agriculture has transformed into more than just producing food and fiber in a sustainable manner. Farmers and agriculturalists now need to connect consumers and the community with their food while helping them understand where food comes from and how it is grown. Jay Hill will discuss how tolerance and understanding between both sides will help reconnect the farmer and consumer. He will share what he does on his farm in New Mexico to help reconnect his community to Agriculture.

